

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 01962 052359Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----060445Z 075123 /13

R 051627Z APR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2672
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1962

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
SUBJ: REACTION OF SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS TO TENTATIVE US
THINKING ON AGENDA FOR MAY NATO NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL
MEETING

REF: STATE 075291 DTG 050139Z APR 77

1. I CALLED ON LUNS APRIL 5 TO CONVEY WASHINGTON'S TENTA-
TIVE THINKING (REFTEL) ON SPECIFIC INITIAL IDEAS FOR MAY
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING AT SUMMIT. HIS FIRST AND
BASIC REACTION, AFTER READING THE PAPER I PROVIDED HIM,
WAS TO SAY THAT HE WAS "IMMENSELY GRATIFIED" AT THIS
EVIDENCE OF US POSITIVE INTEREST IN STRENGTHENING THE
ALLIANCE, FROM WHICH HE DERIVED "GREAT COMFORT".

2. LUNS THEN MADE THE POINT THAT, IN HIS VIEW, EXPERTS,
REFINED PLANNING MECHANISMS, AND MORE STUDIES WOULD NOT ADD
SUBSTANTIALLY TO WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW AND HAVE KNOWN FOR A
LONG TIME. WHAT NATO NEEDS, HE SAID, IS A STRONG INFUSION OF
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POLITICAL WILL TO DO WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS NEEDS DOING. THE
PROBLEM IS POLITICAL, NOT IMPERFECT ORGANIZATION OR LACK OF
KNOWLEDGE. I SAID THAT IN ANY EVENT THE BASIC ONE-YEAR DEFENSE
REVIEW WAS AT THE HEART OF WASHINGTON'S SPECIFIC INTIAL IDEAS,
AND THAT THIS REVIEW WOULD LEND TO A LONG-TERM PROGRAM OF
FORCE IMPROVEMENTS.

3. LUNS WAS ALSO SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS
OF A PROPOSAL THAT THE US NOW JOIN CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN
PROGRAM GROUP (EPG) IN STUDYING DEFENSE EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS.

HE AGREED WITH MY OBSERVATION THAT IT WOULD BE A SOUND PROPOSAL, BUT WAS AFRAID FRANCE WOULD ALMOST SURELY MANAGE TO VETO IT IN THE EPG. AGREEING BASICALLY WITH MY FURTHER OBSERVATION THAT LATER IF NOT SOONER SOME TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE ON THIS ISSUE IN THESE PREMISES HAD TO BEGIN, LUNS SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE WORTHWHILE FOR THE US FIRST TO RAISE THE SUBJECT BILATERALLY WITH THE FRENCH. MORE GENERALLY, HE REMARKED THAT HE WAS OFTEN STRUCK BY THE APPARENT RELUCTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES TO FACE UP TO THE DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITY OF FRANCE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE.

4. THIS LED LUNS TO A DIGRESSION ON HIS BELIEF THAT THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY(EC) IN ITS POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS HAS BEEN POACHING ON NATO GROUND. HE ASKED ME TO REPORT THAT, WHEN IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK, HE WILL RAISE HIS VIEWS ON THE EC PREEMPTING NATO.

5. LUNS CONCLUDED BY REPEATING HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE STRONG US INTEREST IN NATO EVIDENCED BY WASHINGTON'S EARLY THINKING ON SPECIFIC IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENTS, AND BY ASSURING ME THAT HE WOULD CAREFULLY STUDY THOSE IDEAS WITH A VIEW TO DISCUSSING THEM IN WASHINGTON. STRAUSS-HUPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 30-Aug-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NATO01962
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197704102/baaabcto.tel
Line Count: 80
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 28f5b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: STATE 075291 DTG 050139Z APR 77
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2665062
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION OF SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS TO TENTATIVE US THINKING ON AGENDA FOR MAY NATO NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
To: STATE INFO BONN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/28f5b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009